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ON CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP

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[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: The informal plenary of the General Assembly met March 4 and 5 to begin the substantive phase of intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council expansion. 80 delegations spoke during the day and a half discussion on "categories of membership." A core group of states supporting an intermediate option of longer-term, renewable elected seats provided more details about their approach. The Uniting for Consensus (UFC) bloc declared its refusal to consider expanding permanent seats, but most of its members indicated a willingness to consider the intermediate option. The Group of Four (G4) and its supporters argued for an expansion in both categories and rejected the intermediate option. The African Group reiterated its demand for two permanent seats with full privileges and also rejected the intermediate option. Small states pressed their case for better access to the Council. USUN spoke on the second day to support the Chair, after he was criticized by the Egyptian Perm Rep, to indicate U.S. willingness to consider an expansion of both categories, though any expansion of permanent members must be country-specific, and to underline that whatever formula emerges for expansion, it must factor in Charter requirements for ratification. The next meeting will be March 16 on "the question of the veto." End summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Comment: While 28 delegations did voice openness to the intermediate option during the course of the meeting, including Germany from the G4, the stalwarts of the G4 -- India and Brazil -- continued to press for expansion of both categories, along with many of their African and small state supporters in the L.69 group. While many European delegations, with P-5 members France and the UK in the lead, and some UFC members believe the intermediate option will be the solution to eventually garner the support of two-thirds of the membership, USUN gauges that many G4 members and their supporters, particularly the African Group, will not be ready to give up on permanent membership expansion until well into or even after the second round of intergovernmental negotiations. For example, the African Group will have to receive a change in formal instructions from an African Union summit before it will be able to declare its 53 members in support of the intermediate option. At that point, the reform process is likely to accelerate. End comment.

Chair presses for interactive meeting  
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13. (SBU) The substantive phase of intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council expansion began March 4 and 5 with meetings of the informal plenary on "categories of membership." 80 delegations, including the United States, spoke during the three sessions. At the start of the meeting, Afghan Perm Rep and Chairman of intergovernmental negotiations Zahir Tanin pressed member states to clarify their position on categories of membership and show flexibility, including through new proposals. He briefly referred to his March 2 letter to the membership which also previewed how the meeting would be run and included an excerpt from document A/61/47 on categories of membership. Tanin encouraged representatives to limit their statements to three minutes, an instruction which a few flatly ignored, and promised to allow for a second round of interventions to promote greater interaction. Tanin announced that the next two meetings would be held March 16 and 25. (Note: USUN noted to a staff member assisting Tanin from the President of the General Assembly's office that a plenary meeting on March 25 would conflict with the Security Council's Open Debate on the Middle East. He responded that they would look at possible alternative dates. He also confirmed that the March 16 meeting will be on "the question of the veto." End note.)

UK and French press intermediate option;  
Russia and China indicate openness to it  
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14. (SBU) While the UK and France expressed their support for an expansion of both categories of members (permanent and elected), they also promoted the intermediate option. The UK

Perm Rep characterized it as a third category of seats with a longer, renewable term, possibly 5 years. After 15-20 years, a review conference would be held to judge whether to continue with the third category or make additional changes, i.e. adding more permanent seats. He said that the third category of seats would be filled by those states more frequently elected to the Council, thereby freeing up two-year seats for smaller states. In the negotiations, he urged the membership to refrain from concentrating on differences and instead focus on commonalities. The Russian Perm Rep suggested openness to considering the intermediate model. He stressed that the final formula should not lead to a split of the membership and should be above the two-thirds called for in the UN Charter. The Chinese Perm Rep also welcomed the intermediate option and said he hoped other new proposals would be introduced.

More details on intermediate option  
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15. (SBU) The Liechtenstein Perm Rep promoted the intermediate option, arguing that it was the most feasible option given that it meets the UFC (ten new non-permanent members and possible alternative rotation schedules) and G4 (six new permanent and four new non-permanent members) proposals halfway; it does not create an irreversible situation (i.e. more permanent members); it does not lead to more veto rights; and it creates a system of accountability through elections. The Swiss Perm Rep suggested that countries running for an intermediate seat should meet certain objective criteria, including contributions to the UN and peacekeeping operations. He also stressed the absolute need for a review conference at a fixed date with a fixed scope but cautioned that any changes emanating from a review would require additional Charter amendments. The Netherlands Perm Rep, also supported the intermediate option as a way to increase the Council's legitimacy and effectiveness without creating a new power structure, and suggested that a negotiating session be added to discuss the mechanics of a review conference.

16. (SBU) Singapore, which supports an expansion of both categories of membership, is also prepared to consider the intermediate option, according to its Perm Rep. He suggested

that there be a time bar to restrict states from competing for longer-term renewable seats and two-year seats during the same period of years, i.e., if you run for "Division I" and lose then you should be prohibited from running for "Division II" for a number of years and vice versa. This would ensure that states do not wage concurrent election campaigns which would disadvantage small states. He also called for specific review criteria to be determined in advance for the review conference, so that it does not degenerate into a popularity contest. Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Chile, Indonesia, South Korea all voiced support for Singapore's time bar proposal.

UFC opposes expansion of permanent members;  
willing to consider intermediate option  
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¶17. (SBU) The Uniting for Consensus (UFC) bloc members came out strongly opposed to any expansion of permanent members but in favor of an increase in elected members. The Pakistani Perm Rep argued that each permanent seat added on a national basis is a permanent blow to the chances of others to sit on the Council. He also argued for the status of the current permanent members "to be on the table" in terms of regional representation and the veto, both of which are the subject of later meetings. The Italian Perm Rep, noting Singapore's call for criteria for a review conference, asked what criteria countries would be judged against for permanent membership and suggested, for example, their positions on non-proliferation or their contributions to peacekeeping operations, noting that Italy was fifth and Japan 80th on the latter list. The Turkish Perm Rep questioned the permanence of new permanent members. What if the criteria for new permanent members are no longer relevant or additional countries meet them in the future, he asked. The Italian Perm Rep said that while Italy is not "hugely in favor" of the intermediate option, it is willing to consider it.

¶18. (SBU) In one of the more well-argued UFC statements, the Mexican Perm Rep said that expanding the number of permanent seats flies in the face of the democratization of the Council and against greater accountability. Permanent members without a veto would create a new class of Security Council members and greater stratification and inequality on the Council. He said that immediate re-election would allow those who aspire to a continuous presence on the Council to also be accountable to the membership and that this was likely the most viable compromise solution. He expressed an openness to negotiate duration of mandates for non-permanent seats, in effect the intermediate option. The South Korean Perm Rep stressed that periodic elections help promote accountability, and a system that allows winners to continue without review goes against best practices.

¶19. (SBU) The Costa Rican Perm Rep, a member of the Small Five States (S5) group, joined the UFC in rejecting an expansion of permanent members with veto rights, saying veto rights "should not be handed out like party favors." He stressed that adding permanent members would only give more power to "rich members" and reminded the room of the German Perm Rep's comment that permanent members dominate the Council (see below). He asked rhetorically whether new permanent members would deny the representation and interests of others on the Council.

Group of Four rejects intermediate option;  
presses for expansion of both categories  
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¶10. (SBU) The Group of Four (G-4) and its supporters weighed in strongly in favor of an expansion in both categories of membership and against the intermediate option. After the first three-hour session, bloc members and supporters started summarizing that their position had "carried the day."  
(Comment: By the end of the three sessions, some 57 states (94 including all of the African Group members, even those who did not speak or attend) had voiced support for an

expansion in both categories of membership but many expressed disagreement on other issues which will be discussed later, such as extension of the veto. End comment.)

¶11. (SBU) The German Perm Rep noted that permanent members build up expertise in the long-run and therefore dominate Council discussion. Only by enlarging the number of permanent members can reform happen, he said. Citing Article 23 of the UN Charter, he called for "countries of the South" to be represented as well as the largest contributors. The Indian Perm Rep said that not adding permanent members will "just leave the oligarchy alone" and that is not reform. He said that if the membership adds new permanent members, they can hold them accountable to implement reforms such as on Security Council working methods. The Japanese Perm Rep, responding to UFC questions about criteria for permanent members, said that new permanent members should be judged by their "readiness, capacity, and resources" to carry out and monitor the decisions of the Security Council. He referred to the "totality of contributions," including political, diplomatic, and stability.

¶12. (SBU) G-4 supporter Cuba said that whole regions cannot remain unrepresented in the permanent member category and called for seats for Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. He declared that the true power of the Security Council rests with the permanent five members with their veto right. The only reasonable reform, he said, is to modify the representation of developing countries in both categories of membership. He voiced opposition to the intermediate option and renewable terms, suggesting another category of membership could foment divisiveness amongst Council members.

African Group - Quest for  
permanent seats continue  
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¶13. (SBU) The Sierra Leone Perm Rep spoke for the African Group. He reiterated the Ezulwini Consensus and called for

two permanent seats for African states with all the privileges of the permanent category and not less than five non-permanent seats for Africa. He stressed that only a Council with Africa on it as a permanent member would "right the historical injustice" and help contribute to international peace and security. While the Algerian Perm Rep underlined that only the African Union would choose which countries would sit in Africa's seats, the South African Perm Rep later responded that who selects the African states can be determined later. The Ethiopian Perm Rep called the quest for a permanent seat for Africa of "paramount importance."

¶14. (SBU) The Ugandan Perm Rep rejected the intermediate option, saying that it would create a "club of well-resourced contributors." The Cape Verde Perm Rep said that the intermediate option would not be true reform since it would not address the two original categories of membership and that Africa is unlikely to give up its hope and aspirations for a permanent seat. The Egyptian Perm Rep said the intermediate option does not fit African demands and will only lead to their postponement. The Algerian Perm Rep said now was not the time for serious discussion of the intermediate option, but perhaps it would be after the second round.

Small states  
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¶15. (SBU) Many small island states, like Fiji, are G4 supporters. The Fiji Perm Rep voiced support for an expansion in both categories, noting that all states can contribute to international peace and security, and citing Fiji's peacekeeping contributions as an example. He, like many representatives of small island states, called for better access to the Council. Another small island state representative had a different perspective. The Maltese Perm

Rep said that an increase of permanent members would only "increase the privileges and prerogatives of a few for a few more" and called for negotiations to focus only on the addition of non-permanent seats. The St. Vincent and the Grenadines representative, another G4 supporter, called for Article 23(1) of the Charter to be specific on more than just "equitable geographical distribution" for members of the Council and suggested an amendment to include "distribution of geography, vulnerability, and development status." He rejected the intermediate option, saying it would relegate two-year non-permanent members to third class status.

¶16. (SBU) Several UFC members, including Italy and Pakistan, voiced support for a specific elected seat for small states. The Indian Perm Rep, commenting on the calls by small states for representation, noted that there is no "small state" category at the UN. In response, the Maltese Perm Rep said that small states should present to the membership their own list of small states.

#### Other proposals

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¶17. (SBU) UFC leader Italy suggested that there should be new non-permanent seats for regions, including the Africa Group, Asia, GRULAC, and the European Union. The UK Perm Rep quickly took issue with Italy's suggestion of non-permanent seats for regional organizations, saying the Security Council is for member states, not regional organizations. The Indian Perm Rep later challenged the Italian proposal, noting that all non-permanent seats are already permanent regional seats and that it has not led to greater accountability. He also challenged the UFC as "dismissive of Africa's request for a permanent seat." They already have non-permanent seats, he said. Panama voiced support for the original G4 proposal but noted that there was not sufficiently broad support and suggested an alternative intermediate category of membership: six new members elected for 5-year renewable terms. If a state is elected for four consecutive terms in this category, it would become a permanent member. The Slovenian Perm Rep reiterated the Slovenian President's proposal (ref B) of six additional permanent members plus an additional category of elected members with more frequent rotation (twelve countries would be selected to fill six non-permanent seats and would

serve alternating two-year terms for a total period of twelve years).

¶18. (SBU) The Syrian Perm Rep, speaking for the Arab Group, said there should be an equitable geographic distribution of permanent seats and called for an Arab permanent seat to be rotated amongst Arab League members. The French Perm Rep also expressed openness towards a possible permanent seat for an Arab state, in addition to supporting Germany, Brazil, Japan, and an African state. The Bolivian Perm Rep introduced his own proposal -- the elimination of the permanent category and electing only one category of membership on the Security Council.

#### U.S. Intervention

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¶19. (SBU) After listening to two sessions of debate, USUN decided to speak during the last session. Just before the end of the second session, the Egyptian Perm Rep lodged a "personal attack" against the Chair, Ambassador Tanin, stressing repeatedly that neither he nor the President of the General Assembly (PGA) has the right to lead the process, as that is up to the member states. To show continued U.S. support for the Chair and to note the U.S. position on categories of membership, Ambassador Wolff commended the Chair's honest and professional efforts to ensure that the process proceeds in "good faith and with mutual respect and in an open, inclusive and transparent manner" (per GA Decision 62/557). He reiterated Ambassador Rice's February 19 statement that the long-term viability of the Council depends on its reflecting the world of the 21st century and

that the U.S. would make a serious effort to find a way forward that enhances the ability of the Council to carry out its mandate and effectively meet the challenges of the new century.

¶20. (SBU) Ambassador Wolff voiced U.S. openness in principle to a limited expansion of both permanent and non-permanent members. He stressed that any consideration of an expansion of permanent members must by definition be country-specific in nature and that we will take into account the ability of countries to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, and the other purposes of the United Nations. He concluded by noting that whatever formula that emerges for an expansion of Council membership must factor in Charter requirements for ratification, so the membership should avoid dwelling excessively on proposals that are unlikely to be fruitful avenues of pursuit. (Note: PGA Senior Advisor Ambassador Magda Enriquez Beitler told USUN that U.S. remarks were welcomed and helpful. Both G4 and UFC supporters voiced appreciation for the U.S. statement. End note.)  
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